

2019 PEO Government Liaison Program Successes

2019 was an interesting year for the PEO Government Liaison Program (GLP) in its work with MPP's to help regulate the practice of professional engineering in Ontario.

The GLP plays an important role in ensuring the voice of the professional engineer related to regulatory issues is heard in the government.

Here are some of the highlights:

PEO Hosted Four Take Your MPP to Work Days

PEO's innovative "Take Your MPP to Work Day" program continues to be popular with both Chapter members and MPPs with four held in 2019.

Since 2013, individual MPPs have been invited by local Chapters to visit companies who employ professional engineers.

Through facility tours and discussions, the MPP learns more about the work professional engineers do in their communities, and about PEO as a regulator and their impact on protecting public safety.

PEO hosted four events in 2019:

- March, 15, 2019 - Sudbury Chapter hosted MPP **France Gélinas** and **Jamie West** at SNOLAB in Sudbury
- September 23, 2019 – Hamilton-Burlington Chapter hosted MPP **Jane McKenna** at Joseph Brant Hospital in Burlington
- September 26, 2019 – Kingsway Chapter hosted MPP **Christine Hogarth** at Cana Datum in Etobicoke
- November 29, 2019 – Oakville Chapter hosted MPP **Effie Triantafilopoulos** at Rockwool production plant in Oakville

Successful GLP Academies and Congresses held in North Bay, Chatham, Toronto and Kingston

Four GLP Academies and Congresses were held in 2019 with the participation of two Ministers and seven other MPPs. They were held in:

- North Bay - The Northern GLP Academy was held in North Bay on January 26, 2019 with then Finance Minister **Vic Fedeli**, MPP (Nipissing) and now Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and Deputy NDP Leader **John Vanthof**, MPP (Timiskaming-Cochrane). The Chapter representatives were able to spend two hours with Minister Fedeli and three hours with MPP Vanthof. Both MPPs encouraged PEO to keep up their visibility, both at the Chapter level and at Queen's Park.

- Chatham - The Western Region GLP Academy was held in Chatham on May 30 with Deputy Speaker **Rick Nicholls**, MPP (Chatham-Kent-Leamington). MPP Nicholls encouraged attendees to continue hosting Take Your MPP to Work Days. This Academy had a number of young professional engineers. There was much participation from engineers who work in the public service, including a representative from the Ministry of the Environment.
- Toronto - The East and West Central GLP Academy was held in Toronto on October 5 with NDP Attorney General Critic **Gurratan Singh**, MPP (Brampton East), **Sara Singh**, MPP (Brampton Centre) and **Sheref Sabawy**, MPP (Mississauga – Erin Mills). This Academy was the first time an Attorney General Critic was taking notes and getting to know the profession better. MPP Gurratan Singh took on the role of a ‘curious MPP’ and ensured he understood what mattered to the PEO representatives in the room.
- Kingston - The Eastern Region GLP Academy was held in Kingston on November 23 with Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing **Steve Clark**, MPP (Leeds- Grenville- Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes), **Ian Arthur**, MPP (NDP – Kingston and the Islands) and **Randy Hillier**, MPP (Independent – Lanark – Frontenac- Kingston). The feedback from MPPs was great. Minister Clark thought that “PEO had the best government relations set up of any group in government, bar none”

GLP representatives received training about how to speak with their MPPs, discussed PEO’s role as a regulator and increased their understanding of who’s who in government.

GLP Academies and Congresses are important because they help Chapters increase their knowledge every year, share progress to date and build their relationships with MPPs and Ministers in attendance.

Meeting with Attorney General

PEO President **Nancy Hill**, P.Eng., met with Attorney General **Doug Downey**, MPP (Barrie – Springwater – Oro Medonte) on October 29, 2019. Also in attendance were PEO’s CEO/Registrar **Johnny Zuccon**, P.Eng. and Manager, Government Liaison Programs **Jeannette Chau**, P.Eng.,

The delegation briefed Attorney General Downey on the recent findings of the Cayton Report, as well as the work of PEO as the regulator of professional engineering in the province.

Queen’s Park Event

The same delegation was joined on November 20 at Queen’s Park by GLC Chair and PEO West Central Regional Councillor **Warren Turnbull**, P. Eng., GLC Vice-Chair and PEO Councillor **Arjan Arenja**, P.Eng., and PEO Government Relations Consultant **Howard Brown**.

The delegation was introduced in the Legislature by Attorney General Downey.

Meetings were held with **Lindsey Park**, MPP (PC -Durham), Parliamentary Assistant to the Attorney General, **Gurratan Singh**, MPP (NDP - Brampton East), Opposition Attorney General Critic and **John Fraser**, MPP (Ottawa South), Attorney General Critic and Interim Liberal Party Leader

The delegation provided an overview of PEO's role as a regulator and information about the Cayton Report to each MPP with which they hosted a meeting.

Establishing Relationships with Local MPPs

PEO and its Chapters continued to work hard to develop and maintain relationships with all 124 MPPs, particularly the 74 that were newly elected in the last provincial election and had little or no knowledge of PEO. The Chapters do this by inviting MPPs to Chapter licensing ceremonies and events, and attending MPP events. PEO is non-partisan, and the Chapters work with all political parties.

Government Liaison Committee (GLC)

The Government Liaison Committee (GLC) had a very active year overseeing the GLP activities of the Chapters, including, holding quarterly hour-long conference calls with all GLP Chairs across the province.

The GLC continues to meet monthly to discuss GLP activities, regulatory issues, MPP outreach, and communications.

It is one of the few PEO committees with both student and EIT representation and is the only PEO committee with representation from Consulting Engineers of Ontario, **Christine Hill**, P.Eng.

Professional Engineers elected in 2019 Federal Election

There were two Ontario professional engineers elected in the 2019 Federal Election.

They were **Omar Alhabra**, P.Eng., (Liberal – Mississauga Centre) and **Marilyn Gladu**, P.Eng., (PC – Sarnia – Lambton)

Publications to keep informed

The GLP Weekly e-newsletter was sent to MPPs across Ontario, along with some of their key staff members to keep MPPs and PEO members informed on government relations activities.

Each issue covers Chapter meetings and events with MPPs and important PEO news such as Council updates, GLC meeting recaps, the Cayton Report and regulatory news.

The GLP also has a regular column published in *Engineering Dimensions* with information on the program.

A quarterly GLP Chair Newsletter was produced and sent to all GLP Chairs with information on items such as; ways to organize a Take Your MPP to Work Day, seasonal Talking Points that help GLP Chairs

speaking with MPPs, links to helpful information, and a Parliamentary Calendar to show when the legislature is sitting.

2019 was filled with many activities and successes for the Government Liaison Program!

The work of the GLP will continue to be of great importance in 2020, and as we enter into this new decade.